

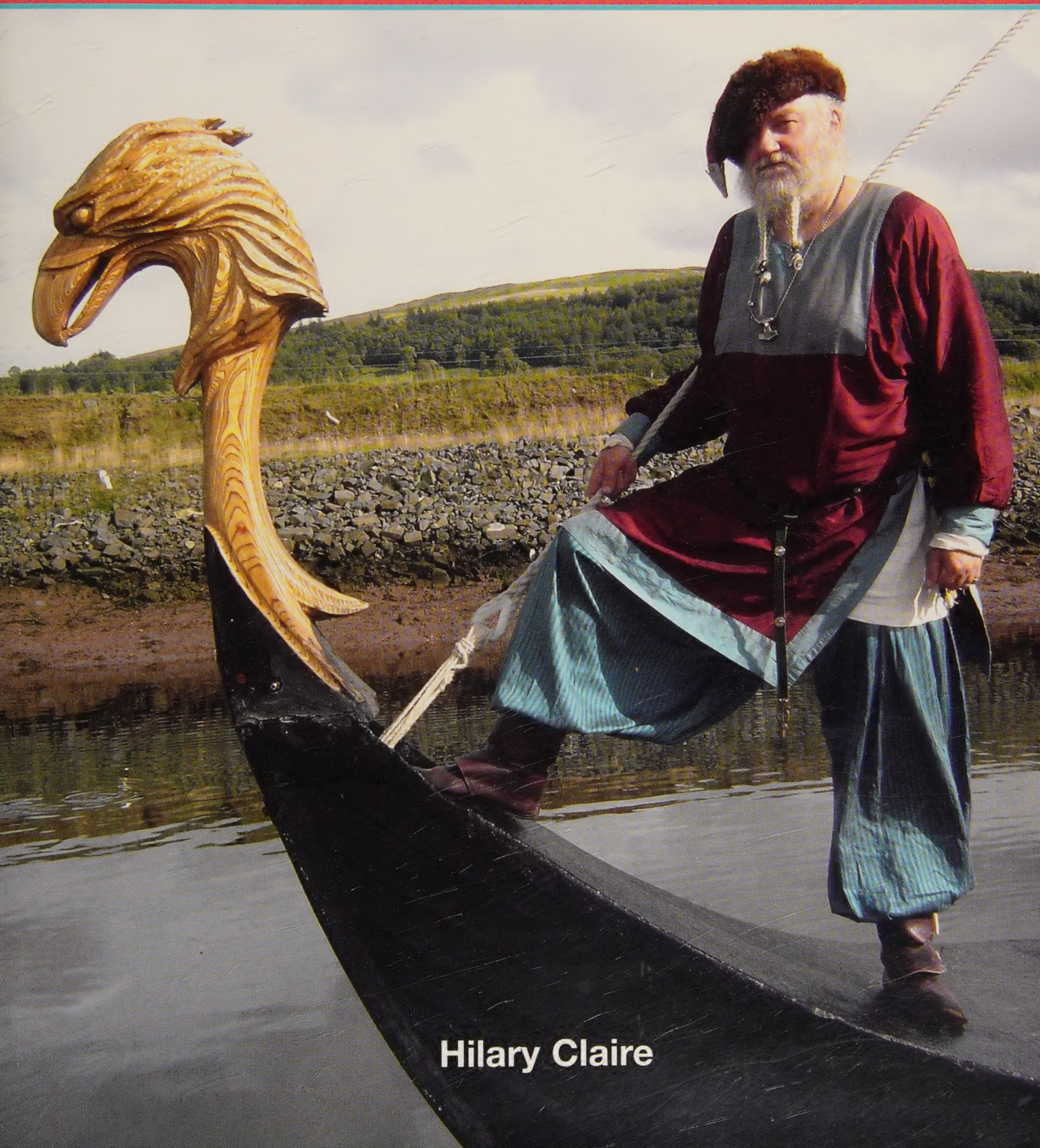
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VIKINGS

Teacher's Activity Book



Hilary Claire



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BBC ACTIVE

VIKINGS

Teacher's Activity Book

Hilary Claire

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INTRODUCTION

The resources in this pack are designed to complement the three BBC Scotland programmes on the Vikings and to support teaching of the QCA Schemes of Work unit 6C: *Why have people invaded and settled in Britain in the past? A Viking case study.*

The programmes on the DVD were made in Scotland and concentrate on the invasion and settlement of Norse people in that area. Though the sites, documents and artefacts refer to the Scottish settlement, the material is relevant wherever the Vikings made their homes. Vikings (meaning 'raiders') came from the three Scandinavian countries now known as Norway, Denmark and Sweden. Norwegian Vikings mainly settled in Scotland, the Orkneys, Shetland and Ireland. Danish Vikings came

further south into England and Swedish Vikings tended to go east towards Russia and even reached Turkey (see map on pages 10-11).

The programmes are designed round key questions, so that the children's learning is enquiry-based. As far as possible you should try and get the children to pose their own questions. Because the material in the DVD relates to the invasion and settlement of Scotland, the Orkneys and the Shetlands teachers working in England and Wales will need to supplement this with material relating to their own areas.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM LINKS

The Primary Strategy (*Excellence and Enjoyment: A Strategy for Primary Schools* [DfES, 2003]) and recent thinking about multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2003) encourage teachers to design work which is creative, cross-curricular and allows children to learn through a variety of approaches.

History

The period of invasion and settlement by the Vikings is a compulsory topic within the English History Curriculum for KS2 and can be tackled either in depth or quite superficially through a 'broad sweep' from BCE 55 to the end of the first millennium. As well as the 'broad sweep' children should study one (but not all) of the three major invasions of the period, in depth: the Romans, the Anglo-Saxons or the Vikings. This resource has been produced to support in-depth study of the Viking period *circa* 793–1066 CE.

The QCA unit 6C: *Why have people invaded and settled in Britain in the past? A Viking case study* has useful ideas about work on the Vikings and suggests some links with citizenship education.

Citizenship and PSHE

Recent advice from the QCA and the DfES (particularly *Excellence and Enjoyment: A Strategy for Primary Schools* [DfES, 2003] and the *The Diversity and Citizenship Review* [DfES, 2007]) emphasise the importance of teachers taking the initiative in designing curricula which match the needs of their own children, finding opportunities to work creatively and in cross-curricular ways. Citizenship education and PSHE particularly benefit from approaches through history. A topic about conquest, emigration and settlement, albeit from over a thousand years ago, provides opportunities for children to consider why people leave their homes; how they and the existing population adapt; and how the newcomers contribute to the existing societies. All this has enormous contemporary relevance. However, teachers may need to help children spell out the analogies, and not assume they will simply 'get it'.

The Vikings are typically portrayed as brutal plunderers. Using Viking sagas and the monks' annals (see pages 8–9) to illustrate the case, teachers may encourage their pupils to consider how perspectives on events are manipulated by the accounts of those who want to present themselves as heroes or victims. The reality is that, though the raiders were as warlike as anyone else at the time, they were mainly traders and farmers; they had economic reasons for trying to improve their lives;

they settled peacefully; they brought trade and new ways of doing things and contributed to the development of Britain as a multicultural society. Typically, people are very proud to trace their Norse heritage – children might reflect how it is that reputations change over time, even if the myths created by repeated story-telling can be false.

Literacy and Drama

There are plenty of opportunities not just for speaking and listening, but for recounting, report writing, descriptive and persuasive writing. The rather polarised accounts of the invasions and the changing perspectives over the centuries of settlement, provide ample opportunities for drama and role play.

Geography

Map work establishing where the Vikings came from, where they travelled to and traded, and where they settled, are essential to children's understanding of the period. Moreover, without a sense of the physical geography of Scandinavia, and the countries the Vikings visited and settled in, children will not fully grasp the Viking's trading enterprise, nor their navigation skills.

Art and Design Technology

Viking craft is a rich area for art and design work – from making plans to build a longship or a long house, to designing Viking jewellery and clothing.

Maths

Calculations of distances travelled, the size and layout of the longships and long houses all provide opportunities for incorporating maths into this study. Vikings used the weight of silver as the measure of value – so there are opportunities for work on this theme.

ICT

Children can use the Internet to research further and can make their own presentations, using, for example, PowerPoint and Word. If there is evidence of Norse settlement in their area, children can use digital photography and digital recording equipment to compile an 'on-site report'.

AN APPROACH TO HISTORY AT KS2

Constructing history

The National Curriculum Key Elements for History (DfES, 1999, p.105) state clearly that history is an active, enquiry-based subject. The Key Elements focus on:

- chronology
- identifying changes and continuities
- interrogating and interpreting evidence
- explaining change and looking at the consequences for different people
- communicating one's findings and understanding.

Pupils need to realise that they should not expect to merely 'look up' what might have happened in the past in some expert source. They should learn that one cannot 'read off' the past from a ready-made script. Pupils should, to the best of their abilities, follow the procedures of historians themselves, in trying to reconstruct the past using material evidence. Likewise, they should appreciate that 'facts' are often contested; historians remain tentative, always keeping in mind that new evidence might emerge.

Chronology

You should have a timeline in your classroom, and keep adding to it. This will give pupils a sense of how life builds on previous events and how people adjust and change.

Pupils can place dates and their findings about material evidence on the timeline. There is plenty of primary evidence for the pupils to work with in this resource. This evidence comes from the artefacts and documents that have survived, mainly available because of archaeology. Since archaeology is so central to our knowledge about this distant period, this resource also provides some information about the discipline.

Historical enquiry

The interrogation of material evidence is central to history, pupils should be given the opportunity to encounter the real evidence left by Vikings and consider how we can use it to reconstruct the past. The diagram on page 5 can be used for work on artefacts. Do encourage pupils to set their own questions, which they can try and answer from the artefacts or research. Encourage them to be tentative rather than certain. If you are able to set up a class museum – with replica artefacts or even photos and drawings – they can use their enquiries to write captions for the displays.

Change and continuity

As pupils work with the original evidence they should be constantly making comparisons with the present, or another historical period they have studied. Pupils should start to appreciate what change and continuity are about when they look for similarities and differences between the ways things were done in the past and the present. It is important in KS2 for pupils to look for changes and continuities in social, economic, religious and political attitudes and ways of life, and not just at differences in actual artefacts. For example, if they are learning about a piece of Viking jewellery, they will consider not just how it was made and what it was made from, but think about such social factors as who wore the jewellery (men, women, rich, poor?) and when it would have been worn, etc.

Cause and consequence

The concepts of 'cause and consequence' are central to history and mean that history is not merely a descriptive subject. Pupils should move beyond trying to gain information from the evidence. History is not just 'what we think we know' but 'why and how we think we know'. In other words, it tries to explain as well as explore.

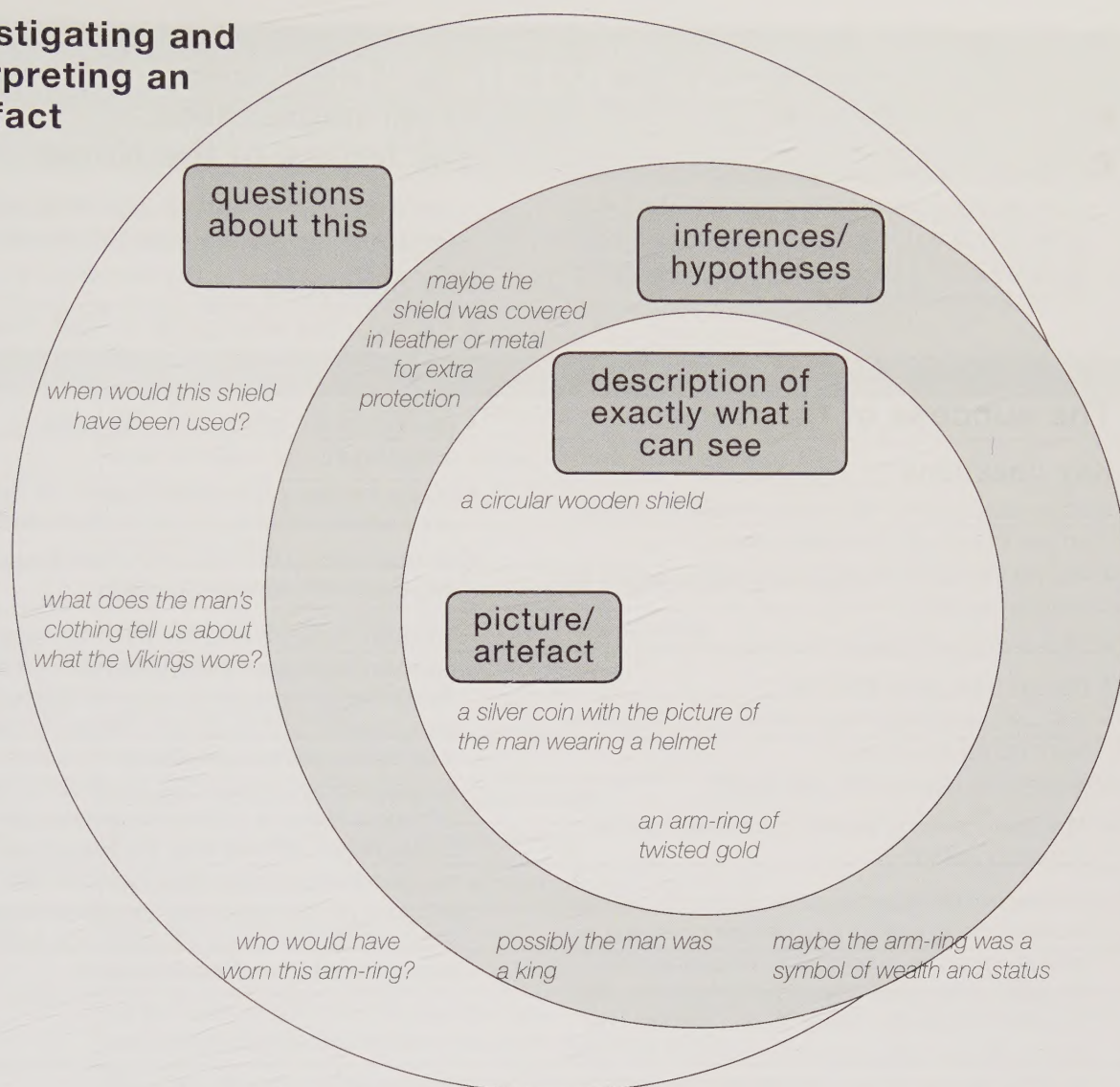
Understanding bias and perspective

As they work with evidence, particularly documentary evidence, pupils need help in looking for the perspective and bias of the person or people who produced the source. They should also be aware that their own interpretations will inevitably be subject to bias. No one has a 'view from nowhere' and this includes historians themselves.

Cross-curricularity

The attempt to understand biases and perspectives in constructing the story of the past all suggest that, despite the necessity for evidence, history is also reliant on empathy, imagination and creativity. These characteristics, sometimes associated with literature rather than history, are encouraged by *Excellence and Enjoyment: A Strategy for Primary Schools* (DfES, 2003) and are an example of cross-curricularity underpinning history. Drama and fiction are particularly valuable in helping work on bias and perspective and also to interpret history and bring it alive.

Investigating and interpreting an artefact



PROGRAMME DETAILS

Programme one: The coming of the Norse

Key questions

- When did the Vikings come?
- Where did they come from?
- Why did Vikings leave their homelands?
- Where did they settle?
- Whose accounts of the raids do we have and can we trust them?
- What do we know about the Viking longships and the voyages from Scandinavia?

Programme one establishes the chronology of the Viking invasions at the end of the eighth century CE. It maps the route taken by the Norwegian Vikings who settled in Scotland, Ireland, Shetland and Orkney. After asking

children to consider why people might leave their homes, it gives some reasons for Viking emigration from their homeland. The programme emphasises the difference between fact and mythology: the Vikings are particularly susceptible to erroneous ideas (for example there is no evidence that they wore horned helmets or were as savage as some believe!). We have two accounts of Viking raiding: one from monks at the time, the other from Viking sagas. The Viking raids in longships were particularly feared by monasteries, which were targeted and plundered. Therefore the monks' annals probably exaggerated Viking ferocity. On the other hand, the sagas emphasise the Viking's heroic exploits. The message is clear: the perspectives and bias of the writers needs to be recognized and stories passed down through generations need to be checked against solid evidence from archaeologists and historians. But even archaeologists and historians don't have perfect access to the past and some inferences and gaps in our knowledge are inevitable.

A role-play between a monk and a Viking raider explores the different perspectives and misunderstandings that these two groups, meeting head on, might have experienced.

The programme asks some questions and provides expert information about the longships and what the voyage from Scandinavia might have been like. It ends by asking children to think where their sympathies might lie: with the monks or the Vikings.

Programme two: The success of the Norse

Key questions

- What happened when the invaders settled down? How did they interact with the existing people?
- How did the Vikings establish themselves as settlers and what did they do?
- What were their houses and their way of life like?
- What were their crafts and skills?
- How does archaeology help us know about people from over a thousand years ago?
- What can we find out from grave goods?
- What were the mutual benefits for the Vikings and the existing population?

This programme concentrates on the period of settlement and asks questions about how the newcomers and the existing population adapted to one another. The Vikings as settlers rather than raiders is the theme. The programme shows what Viking houses were like, how they actually lived and demonstrates some of their crafts and skills. Museum workers use artefacts to explain the discipline of archaeology, and help children see how we build up a picture of Viking lives from the things they left behind, including grave goods. We know from artefacts what the long houses were like; how they were built and how the interiors were organised; the kinds of diet Vikings lived on; how the women ground corn for bread, using stone querns; the games the Vikings played; their clothes and the difference between the dress and possessions of rich and poor. We also learn how they paid for goods: their system of giving metal (silver) of equivalent value for goods, is similar to modern exchange. In the later Viking period, they minted coins.

A role-play between a local farmer and a Viking farmer emphasises the mutuality of their relationships as the Vikings became more settled. The Vikings brought goods and contact with the wider world to Scotland for the first

time. Vikings learned about local farming and the locality.

Programme three: The legacy of the Norse

Note that in this programme Scottish Vikings are now called Norse (because they came from Norway).

Key questions

- The Vikings have settled and are no longer 'raiders'. What can we deduce about the Norse settlements from ruins on Orkney and Shetland?
- How can we find out more about the Norse from runes and pictures?
- What is the legacy of the Norse, in particular through place names in Scotland and the Northern Isles?
- How do we know that by the end of the Viking period, the majority of Norse were Christian?

The third programme reviews some of the material in the previous two programmes and takes us to Orkney and Shetland where we explore the ruins at the important sites at Jarlshof and the Brough of Birsay. Archaeological finds, runes scratched like graffiti on the walls of a burial chamber at Maeshowe, as well as the fine St Magnus Cathedral in Orkney are evidence of Norse culture, religion and craft skills. The programme ends by countering the prejudice that the Norse were merely ferocious, primitive plunderers, and concentrates on their skills and legacy in the form of additions to the English language and trade with the wider world.

TIMELINE OF THE VIKING AGE

CIRC. 793-1066 CE

Children need to realise that Viking conquest and settlement of Britain, was part of a much larger period of invasion and settlement, just as the Roman conquest had been. Through the Vikings, Britain was linked through trade

and colonisation with countries much further afield. The chronology also shows that there were distinct periods in the Viking Age, as you would expect over three and half centuries.

Date	Event
789	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</i> documents sighting of Viking ships off south coast of England
793–5	Danish sea-raiders sack the Anglo-Celtic monasteries at Lindisfarne, Iona and Jarrow
circ. 795	Raids on Ireland begin. By 855 Dublin established under Norwegian Vikings
799	Vikings attack France
810	Death of Charlemagne Emperor of the Franks, who had held the Norsemen at bay in France
834–5	Danes move with larger armies inland into Britain, from coastal monasteries
839–40	Swedish Vikings navigate deep into Russia, and reach Byzantium
circ. 844– 845	Raids on Moorish Spain begin
845	Vikings travel up the Seine and raid Paris
circ. 845	Al-Ghazal's embassy to Turgeis, King of the Vikings in Ireland
circ. 851	First Norse raid on Wales recorded in the Welsh chronicles
860.	Vikings reach west of Italy, North Africa and Jerusalem and attack Constantinople
circ. 860	Norse discover Iceland (and settle from 870)
862	Viking rule of Russia and Ukraine (dynasty lasts till 1598)
865	Ivar the Boneless invades British Isles from East Anglia, aiming at conquest rather than plunder – Ivar and his son Guthrum are generally considered the most important Vikings in the conquest of England
866	York (Jorvik) conquered and adapted as permanent Viking settlement and trading station
876	Much of north east England under Danish rule – the Danelaw
878	Alfred the Great defeats Guthrum and forces the Vikings to accept Christianity in return for continued rights over the Danelaw
882	Swedish Vikings in Russia reach as far as modern Uzbekistan
900	Greenland discovered, settled roughly 986
911–2	Danish Vikings occupy Normandy. Their descendants become the Normans
circ. 922	Ibn-Fadlan, an Arab ambassador to the Scandinavian Rus along the Volga, writes his account of Viking customs, including a full description of a ship/cremation funeral
954	Eric Bloodaxe, last independent Viking King of Jorvik, driven out and killed
965	Denmark adopts Christianity
986	Bjarni Herjolfsson blown off course on way to Greenland and reaches Newfoundland
995	Norway adopts Christianity
1000	Iceland and Greenland officially convert to Christianity
Late 10th century	New period of organised Viking raids from Denmark, powerfully united under one king
circ. 1000 –1005	Leifr Eiriksson makes voyages to Vinland (America), attempts to settle prevented by from Native Americans
1016	Cnut (Canute) King of Norway and Denmark becomes king of all England
1008	Sweden adopts Christianity
1066	The Norman Conquest: Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, killed during an attempted invasion of England fighting against Harold Godwinsson, the English king. Harold Godwinsson killed at Hastings by the forces of Duke William of Normandy. The practice of 'going Viking' (see page 8) ends.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE VIKINGS

This section provides more information and a wider context than the DVD, which concentrates on the Viking invasion and settlement of Scotland. You will need to supplement the material in the DVD using the opportunities in your own locality to include the English settlements, particularly in the Kingdom of York, and the 'Danelaw' (see below). There are recommended websites on page 24. We do urge you and your pupils to exercise caution about material on 'non academic' websites. Some just recycle discredited views which have been disputed or disproved by archaeologists and contemporary historians working with the sources.

Points for children to understand about the Vikings

- The stereotypes of Vikings as a group of bloodthirsty, horned-helmeted raiders, all from the same place are misguided.
- It is hard to divide people into 'goodies and baddies'. Vikings were probably no more bloodthirsty than other tribes.
- The most distinctive feature of the Viking Age is probably the Viking's extraordinary navigational skills and the trade links they developed.
- Europe didn't consist of 'nations' as it does now. Tribes of different peoples under their kings engaged in farming, trading and often fighting each other to gain control of land and goods, throughout the period.
- We can't really talk about 'us and them' with respect to the British and the Vikings, it is more complicated. Anglo-Saxons had themselves come from elsewhere and joined peoples who were already a mixture of Celts and Romans; Norse people settled, intermarried and assimilated after their early hit and run raids; Norwegians from Ireland attacked Danes in the Midlands and settled; the Normans who conquered in 1066 were themselves Norse.

Who were the Vikings?

The original ancestors of the Norse in Scandinavia came from the Indus Valley, in what is now Pakistan and western India. The word Viking means 'raider' but tended to be used generically for Scandinavians at this period. 'Going Viking' meant going on raids. Though they started off as raiders they later became colonists, trading, farming and fishing, and, like the Romans and the Anglo-Saxons, assimilated with the people who were already there. Their social system was hierarchical, with kings at the top, followed by 'earls' (jarls), then free people, which included farmers, traders and craft workers. Vikings also

took slaves who were treated as belongings and bought and sold. Children born into slavery were also slaves, but some slaves were granted their freedom and became members of the Viking household. A Viking settlement outside Scandinavia would probably have included people from other countries the Vikings had penetrated, such as the Spaniards, Russians, Portuguese and perhaps even people from the Middle East.

Where did the Vikings come from and where did they settle?

Look at the map on pages 10–11. This shows that Vikings came from the three countries in Scandinavia we now know as Denmark, Sweden and Norway, but these names were only used at the end of the Viking period. Some sources refer to the Norse and the Danish – distinguishing Norwegians from Danes, others call everyone 'Norse'. Swedish Vikings mainly went east into Russia and as far south as the Mediterranean and Constantinople. Danish Vikings went due east into northern England and took over the area round York, and later had control of much of Yorkshire (called the Danelaw). They also invaded and settled in Northern France. Norwegian Vikings mainly settled in Scotland where they overcame the Picts, but were later themselves defeated by Scots. They also settled in the Shetland Isles and Orkney, and settled in Ireland. Norwegian Vikings discovered Greenland and Iceland, and reached Newfoundland in Canada in 986 CE, long before the Spanish arrived under Columbus. They also returned to England at various times, fighting both Anglo-Saxons and Danes.

How do we know about the Vikings?

There are four main sources: documentary, archaeological, linguistic and dendrochronology.

Documentary sources:

- i) The monks' annals written by monks at the time, tell the story from the point of view of people who were the victims of Viking raids. As the DVD points out, the accounts may well be exaggerated.
- ii) The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle provides a year-by-year, blow-by-blow account of events from BCE 1–1194. The section which gives information about the Viking raids was written during Alfred the Great's rule and generally thought to be biased towards Alfred. The Norse (called

the Danes, or 'the Army' in the Chronicle) are presented as you would expect from people writing about the enemy. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* also has images of Vikings which tells us something of their way-of-life. Until quite recently, the annals and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* were the main sources of information on the Vikings, which accounts for the familiar stereotype of Vikings as nothing but bloodthirsty predators.

- iii) The Norse sagas are semi-mythological stories, perhaps 'family history', which were passed down through an oral tradition for several hundred years, before being written down from the thirteenth century. In the sagas, the Norse are presented as heroic adventurers. Our knowledge of Viking gods and some detail about daily life and customs comes from them.

Archaeological sources

Dublin is the main site for Irish archaeological sources: an important port for the Norwegian Vikings who settled there. Jorvik (York) is the most important site for English Vikings who were Danish, not Norwegian. In Wales, England and Ireland there are a number of other places providing evidence of Viking settlement.

Archaeological finds have changed our views about the Vikings, which had mainly been based on written sources. The excavations in York in the 1980s revealed an extraordinary amount of new evidence, which had been preserved in the damp soil. The savage Viking raider in his horned helmet has no evidence base. Victorian historians perhaps thought the decorated horns, sometimes found buried with Vikings alongside their helmets, had fallen off! Historians now view the Vikings in a more rounded way, as navigators, settlers, fur trappers, traders, entrepreneurs and skilled, artistic craft workers.

- i) Artefacts, for example, grave goods and objects discovered during archaeological digs. There are very plentiful archaeological Viking artefacts. Some of the most important in Britain come from the Jorvik site. Artefacts include household objects, clothes, jewellery, weapons and games. As well as grave goods (things buried with the corpse, to accompany them in the afterlife or as symbols of status, wealth, preferred activities, etc.) we can find out the age, sex and health status of people from their human remains. From rubbish dumps we can find out what people ate and discarded. Through finds such as jewellery and the skeletons of the longships, we can glean just how skilled Vikings were and the extent of their culture. As with other civilisations, archaeologists use evidence found elsewhere to make inferences about Viking life in Britain.
- ii) Buildings There are quite a lot of sites, particularly in Scotland and the Northern Isles showing the layout of houses and villages. From the stone churches built in the later Viking period, we have further evidence of their craft skills, as well as of their Christianity.
- iii) Runes Viking writing followed an alphabet called 'futhark' (named after the first few letters in their alphabet). The

runes were carved on sticks or stones, or onto carvings and only consist of straight lines because they are easier to carve. Lots of runic graffiti has been found, usually on stones called petroglyphs. The alphabets for the different Scandinavian tribes differed slightly, evidence of some individuality between tribes. The runes weren't used for stories or texts, but for labels and keeping records for trade and so on. Runes were supposed to have magical powers: the runes on spear heads for instance, identified the owner, but also gave them power over their enemies.

- iv) Pictures and sculpture There are some pictures, tapestries and sculptures carved by Viking craftspeople, from which we can gather information about their skill and way of life.

Linguistic sources

Though there were similarities between the language of the Saxons and the Vikings, we sometimes forget that modern English has been greatly influenced by old Norse! There is a great deal of evidence of Viking settlement in the language, particularly from place names in the old Danelaw (see Activity sheet 2), the words for numbers, days of the week and other ordinary words. For example, Tiw's day became Tuesday, Woden's day became Wednesday, Thor's day became Thursday and Frig's day became Friday. The DVD gives examples of place names in Scotland.

Dendrochronology sources

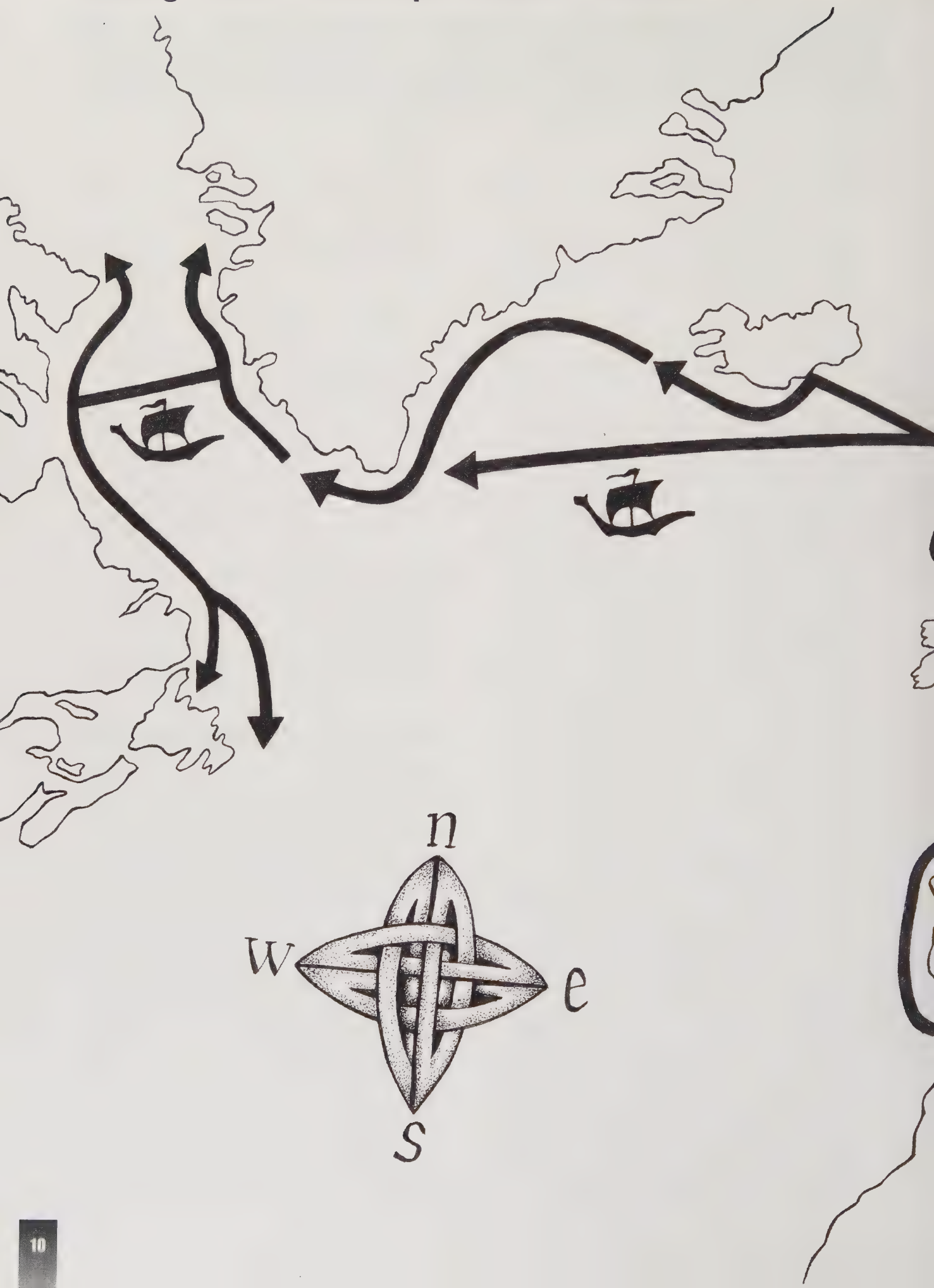
This fascinating science allows historians to calculate the age of artefacts made of wood by counting the number of rings found in the wood. We know that one of the longships found off the coast of Norway was made from oak trees cut down in Dublin over a thousand years ago!

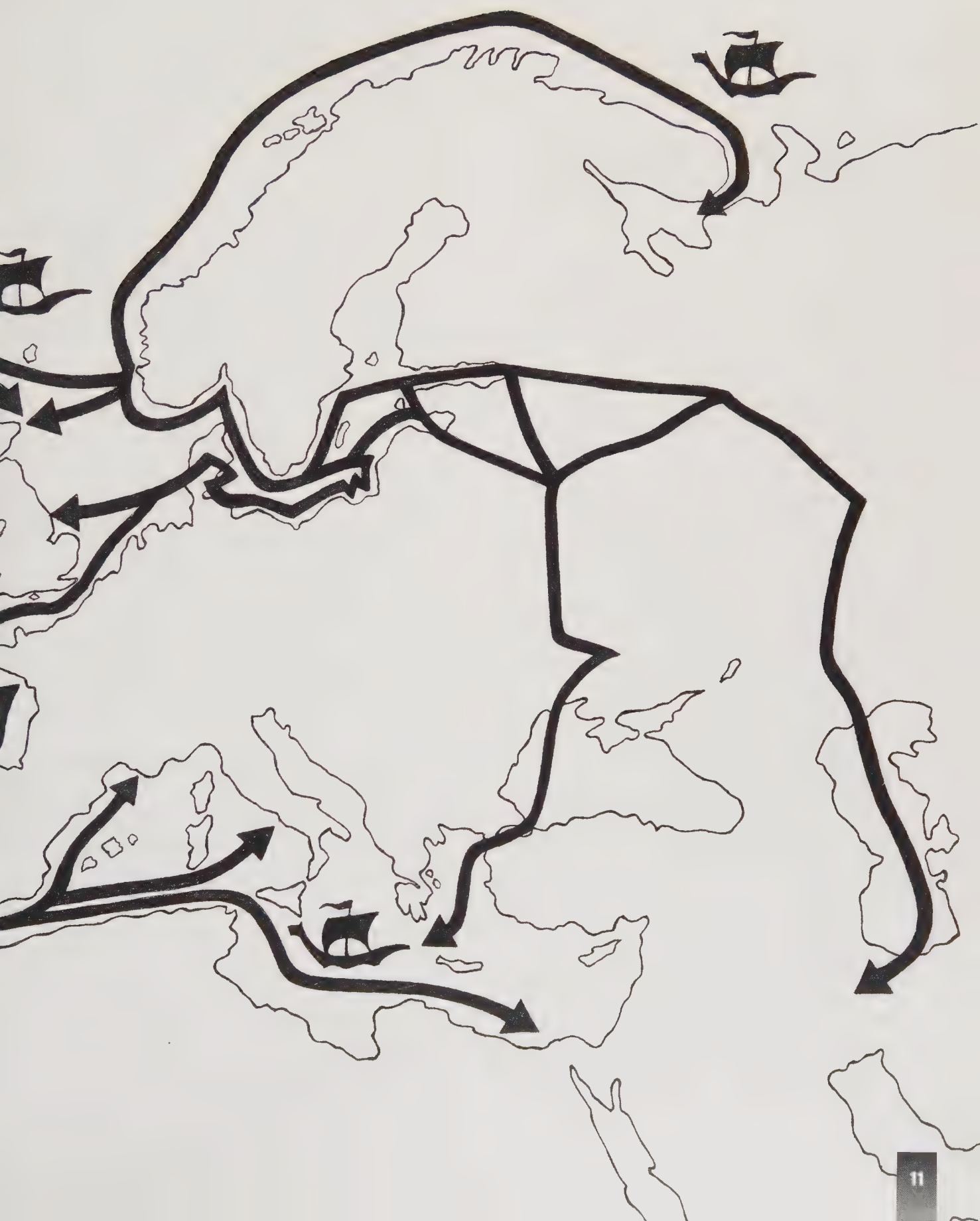
Why did the Vikings leave their own lands?

The Vikings left their own lands and raided other lands almost certainly to gain access to wealth and for trading opportunities. The monasteries were rich pickings, with their valuable manuscripts, gold and precious metal objects – monasteries were both the customers for goods raided elsewhere, and the source! The initial raiders were small hit-and-run bands, not armies, and probably were seeking plunder rather than to settle elsewhere. The beginnings of the Viking raids coincided with the invention and development of longships (see page 12), which made raids along the coasts and up rivers very efficient (and the rewards were good!). Although Vikings stopped attacking and destroying the monasteries when they converted to Christianity, towards the end of the tenth century, Danish kings mounted massive invasions and took over England.

As the raids became more frequent, the Vikings started to overwinter in the places they had attacked and this led to settlement, initially round the coasts, but after a while further inland, where they established villages and farms

Viking trade and exploration routes





in their new homes. Later, people, particularly from the infertile Norwegian coast, seemed to have left to colonise the places they now knew about. Later still, huge organised armies of Danes and Norwegians invaded, aiming to conquer and take over new lands. In all cases, there are records of intermarriage with local people, whether Irish, Saxon or Scots. Norse who had settled in Ireland also attacked areas under Danish control at one point. Therefore, the period needs to be looked at in terms of the need for better land together with the desire to raid for wealth, trade and conquest.

What made the Vikings so successful as explorers and invaders?

Shipbuilding

The Vikings ventured far beyond their own shores, whether to explore, to raid or to trade. But without their ships and their navigation skills, the Viking Age simply would not have taken place. We know about the ships from 'ship finds' from the late nineteenth century but significant finds from the 1960s onwards have added to our knowledge. There have been a number of fascinating projects to reconstruct the ships and re-enact the voyages.

There were many different types of ship: the earliest were small rowing boats with a couple of men each pulling two oars, but by the seventh century they had a square sail with a single mast to supplement the oars and these made much longer journeys possible. The sails were made from linen woven from flax, or wool. Tapestries show that these were sewn in small diamond shapes, edged with leather, and that they were often dyed red. It seems that the Vikings protected themselves with the sail, like a sort of tent, when they pulled into shore and wanted to rest. The ships mainly sailed down wind, but could also tack (sail against the wind). Given the wild weather and currents, the Vikings must have been extremely knowledgeable and skilful sailors.

Trading vessels (called knarrs) have been discovered with a fixed mast and only four oar ports in their 15 metre length. Great warships that were over 30 metres long had crews of more than a hundred men. There were also multi-purpose ships that could trade and/or raid. One of these ships was found at the end of the nineteenth century in Norway and a replica was sailed across the Atlantic to America.

The hulls (the floating parts of the boat) were made of oak planks, which were trimmed, overlapped and riveted together with iron nails. A thin rope of twisted hair/wool soaked in pitch (boiled birch tree sap) was trapped between the planks, forming a flexible waterproof membrane. The hulls were built first, with the bow and stern curving upwards. This was both seaworthy and ergonomic, as the ship could sail in either direction

without 'going about' (turning). When the hull was finished, the ribs were tied in with the thin fibrous roots of the Larch tree. The carved dragon's head was intended to intimidate: it was far too valuable to stay up when the boat was at sea, so it was removed and stored. The keel (weighted fin at the bottom of the boat) was very shallow – less than a metre, so the boat could land in shallow water and go up rivers. Because of the design, the ships could negotiate rocks by tipping the boat to one side, or towards the stern and riding over the obstacle. There is a story that a Viking king escaped from the Turks by tipping his boat over the chain which secured the harbour.

Navigation

The Vikings were far in advance of all other peoples not just in the design of their ships, but their navigational knowledge. They didn't have maps or compasses, but knew how to set course by the stars. They also watched for birds and seaweed which indicated land. They may have used a 'sun shadow stone' (a stone or board upon which north and south could be deduced from the shadows) to help with directions at sea and on land.

Where did the Vikings trade?

We have plenty of archaeological evidence that the Viking traders went far afield in the knarrs, to sell their own goods, and buy things they needed. The Swedish Vikings traded down the river systems from the Baltic into Central Europe, as far as Constantinople, though some ships from Denmark and Norway went round Portugal and into the Mediterranean. From the Middle East they obtained silver (highly prized, using weight as the measure of value), spices and silks, some from as far afield as China. Small pieces of glass have been found – which they melted down and used for beads; they imported wine from France and Germany and honey and metals not found in the north of Europe. In return, Vikings traded furs, woven cloth including woollen cloth, salted cod, walrus ivory and weapons.

What do we know about Viking domestic life?

In England, domestic life was probably similar to the Anglo-Saxons. They lived in large family groups, which often included grandparents. The eldest son inherited the family farm and was responsible for the rest of the family. Men worked as farmers, traders, fishermen, and craft workers. Women looked after the children and the household; wove and sewed clothes; made butter and cheese; dried and smoked meat and fish; and knew about herbs to use as medicine. Vikings had metal, pottery and wooden utensils. A glass working furnace was discovered at the Jorvik site, and fragments of glass showing they made beads and drinking vessels, but there is no evidence that they had glass windows. The soda for making glass was imported in bulk from the

Mediterranean. Plentiful evidence of metalworking, wood turning and leather work comes from the Jorvik site. Rich women had slaves and servants. When men went abroad, trading or raiding, women took over responsibility for the home. If her husband mistreated her, or was lazy or a poor provider, she could divorce him, i.e. she had rights to property, inheritance and divorce, unlike many women elsewhere in Europe at the time.

Children did not go to school, but learned from their parents and from stories about the law, their history and religion. Husbands were usually chosen for girls by their fathers when the girls reached puberty – between 12 and 15 years old. She would bring a dowry, but everything she brought remained her own personal property. Feasts, festivals and sports were an important part of Viking life. Men showed off their bravery and skill in archery, wrestling, fencing and athletics.

The Vikings built long houses from the materials that were available, such as wood, stone, thatch and turf. There were no windows or chimneys, though food was cooked inside on a fire. The animals slept at one end of the house in cold weather. The Vikings used furs and woven fabrics to keep warm. Evidence has been found of musical instruments (though not the music) and board games.

Archaeologists have been able to reconstruct Viking clothes from oddments which have survived in grave goods. The men wore long woollen shirts, long cloth trousers held by drawstrings or a sash, a sleeved jerkin or short coat with belt, socks and soft leather shoes or long leather boots. They wore an iron helmet and mail chain in battle. Women wore long linen dresses, long woollen tunics like an apron, held together by a pair of brooches with a chain or strings of beads, shawls, thick woollen socks and soft leather shoes. They had woollen hats and cloaks in cold weather, cloaks fastened at the shoulder with a brooch or pin. Jewellery, including rings bracelets, brooches and necklaces, was popular and commonplace. The Vikings seem to have liked very bright colours: they were skilled at using plants and minerals to dye their clothes.

Who did the Vikings worship?

Initially the Vikings were pagans with a variety of gods whose great enemies were giants. Stories of the gods and giants were transmitted through sagas, written down from the thirteenth century. Some archaeological finds also depict gods. In Britain, in due course, Vikings converted to Christianity, partly through their kings, partly through intermarriage, partly perhaps, because it was of benefit to them when trading with Christians who weren't supposed to trade with pagans. Scandinavia was converted gradually during the eleventh and thirteenth centuries by missionaries and the conversion of their kings to Christianity.

Where did the Vikings settle in Britain?

The chronology shows that after the raid on Lindisfarne and other coastal monasteries from 793 onwards, and the establishment of a Viking settlement in Ireland, the main invasions came about 40 years later. The Danish colonisation of England began in 866-7 when an army under Ivar the Boneless arrived in East Anglia, moved north and conquered York and Northumbria. Ivar also tried to conquer the Norwegians in Dublin, but failed. In the next ten years Danish Vikings conquered most of Yorkshire and the East Midlands. In the 870s, one of Ivar's sons, called Guthrum, attacked Wessex, King Alfred's territory. Initially, Alfred tried to pay them off with 'Danegeld' to stay away but Guthrum returned with an army. Eventually, in 878, Alfred defeated Guthrum in a battle on Salisbury Plain, and, in the Treaty of Wedmore, forced him and his important men to become Christians. This treaty recognized the Danelaw: the land north of a line from London to the Mersey, where Danish rule prevailed. Here, the Danes settled down and started farming.

The early invasions of Ireland, Scotland, Orkney and Shetland followed the pattern of the early raids on coastal monasteries elsewhere. By the mid-ninth century Ireland was settled by Norwegians, who subsequently also had designs on England. Norwegians settled in the islands, and the Northern and Western parts of Scotland, as farmers and traders.

Around the turn of the millennium the Danish invasions started again. Denmark had become more powerful and unified and hundreds of ships would turn up regularly each year with thousands of men attempting to make the whole of Britain politically part of Scandinavia. The English kings tried to buy them off with ever increasing sums of Danegeld. England finally fell to the Danish King Cnut (or Canute) in 1016. Cnut's reign marked the end of Viking military raids into England, although there were sporadic raids around the coast for some time. Cnut was a Christian and built many churches. During his reign there was peace, and farming and crafts flourished. England was protected against Viking raids, because Cnut controlled most of Scandinavia as well as England. In 1066, King Harald Hardrada of Norway tried to crush the Anglo-Saxon King Harold Godwinson, at Stamford Bridge near York. But though Harold Godwinson was victorious, his army was severely depleted. He hurried down to Hastings to face the invading force of William of Normandy, and his army was defeated. England was now ruled by the Normans, whose ancestors were actually Vikings too!

Viking ships

Name _____

Date _____



Look at the example of a longship above and watch Programme 1 in which Orm explains about the longships.

Imagine that you are a museum curator explaining to a group of children about longships. You will need to prepare what to say.

- Your teacher will tell you which aspects to concentrate on.
- Work in groups of three or four.
- Decide what you want to include in your talk.
- Will you have diagrams for the children to look at during your talk?
- Use your notes to prepare your presentations. These can be presented on PowerPoint and could include pictures you've obtained from the Internet. Each person in the group should help present.

ACTIVITY SHEET 2

The legacy of the Vikings in place names

Name _____

Date _____

Although it is easy to get muddled, because Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse had similar roots, the names of many places in Britain show that the Vikings were once settled there. The video has lots of Scottish place names, but there are plenty in England too, especially in the old Danelaw in the West of England, north of the river Mersey.

Did you know that 'Riding', as in West Riding, comes from the Viking word for a third? (The Danelaw was divided into three parts.)

Find the Viking's legacy

Use the list below to see how many places with old Norse origins you can spot on a modern map of Britain. Check whether the meanings of the Norse words match with the geography of the place.

A dictionary of old Norse place names

Use the translations of the old Norse words to make an illustrated dictionary for your class. The dictionary could have an illustration of what the word means and include any places you have found on the map that use that word.

barrow = small hill

beck = brook or stream

berg = rock, small mountain

blea = blue

borg (borough) = castle, fortified town

by = farmhouse or dwelling

crag = rocky cliff

dale = valley

fell = mountain, high grazing land

garth = fenced land or garden, farm

gata (gate) = street, path or track

gill = ravine or deep cut in the earth

holm = island

how = hill

ing = meadow or pasture

keld = cold

kirk = church

knott = rocky hill

nes (ness) = headland, promontory

Øy (ey) = island

pike = mountain peak

rigg = ridge

saetr (seter) = cow pasture or high ground

scale = hut or shack

sund (sound) = strait

tarn = pond

thorpe = hamlet, village or outlying farm

thwaite = clearing

toft = homestead

ton = hedge or fence; later a farm

vik (vig) = bay

water = lake

wath = ford

wick (from vik) = bay

Writing runes

Date _____

Write a message on the rune stone below.

Handwritten alphabet: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z



ACTIVITY SHEET 4

Men's and women's clothes

Name _____

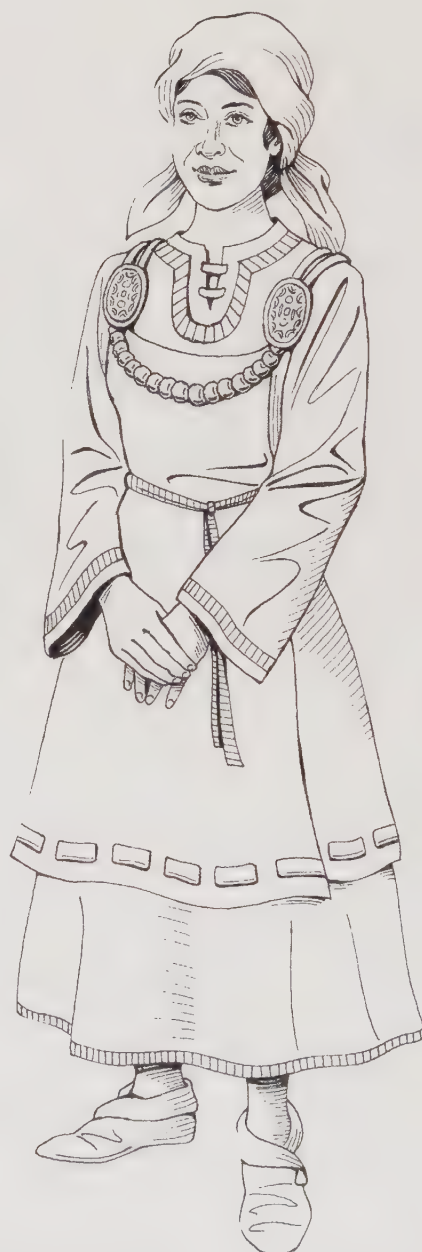
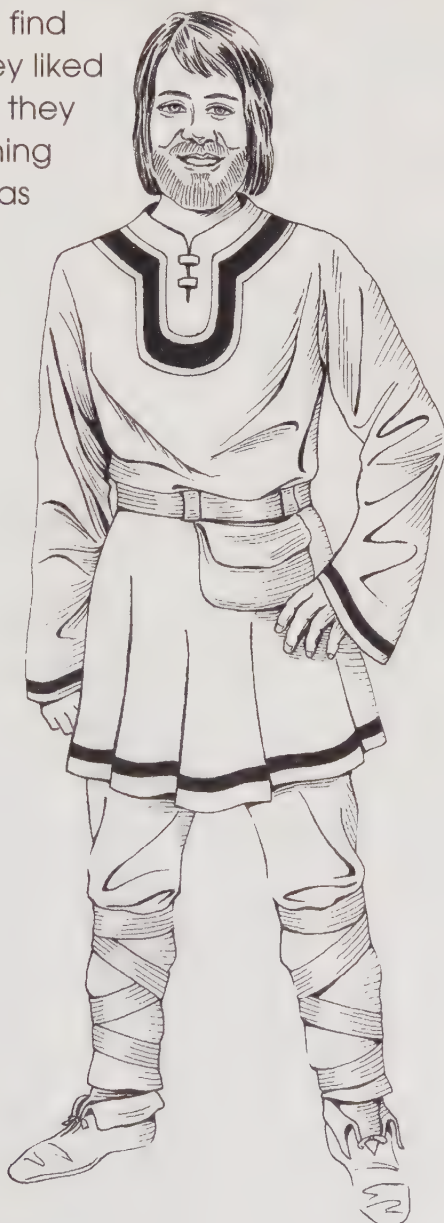
Date _____

Archaeologists have done extensive work on reconstructing Viking life, mostly using scraps of material and artefacts found in graves.

Look at the man and woman below. Draw and cut out two human figures, one man and one woman. Now use the drawings below and any more information you can find from the Internet to make paper clothes for your Viking figures, which you can attach with small fold-over rectangular flaps. You should build up the layers bit by bit. Don't forget their undergarments!

Check what you can find about the colours they liked to wear and the way they decorated their clothing to make your model as realistic as possible.

Vikings were very keen on jewellery (look back at the artefacts you saw on the video). You might like to make a third paper figure and dress him as a Viking warrior.



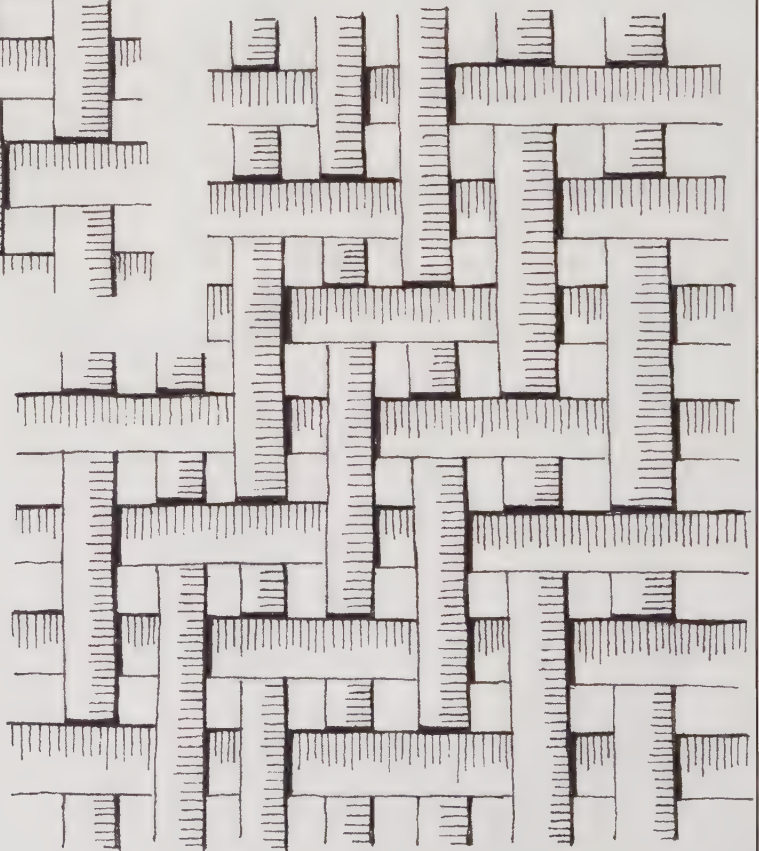
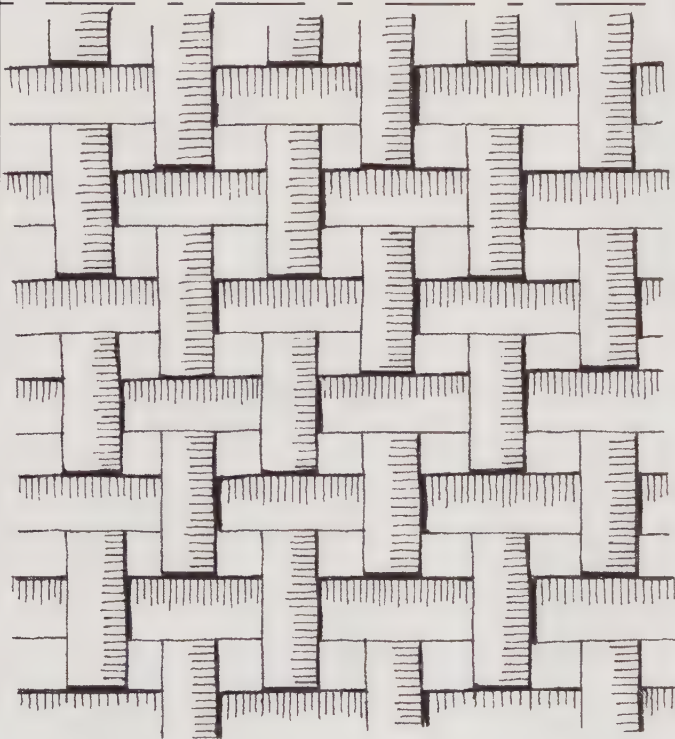
Weaving and knitting

Name _____

Date _____

Can you weave patterns as skilfully as Viking women did?

Look at the images of Viking men and women in the second programme about Viking settlers. The Vikings favoured bright colours and they also decorated their clothes with silks and threads of gold if they were wealthy and had been able to obtain these from trading abroad. Collect some wool and some shiny threads, and see if you can weave some realistic Viking material. Look at the diagrams below to help you.



ACTIVITY SHEET 6

Trade and exploration

Name _____

Date _____

Using the table below, insert symbols for the goods being traded and place them on their country of origin on the accompanying map. Make sure you add a key for the symbols you use.

What the Vikings traded and where they obtained these goods:

Items traded	Where items bought
Silk, spices, silver, jewels	Constantinople and other Arab countries such as Iraq (Baghdad)
Slaves, furs and skins, antlers, silver	Russia
Furs, skins, walrus tusk ivory	Iceland
Amber	Baltic sea
Wine and glass	France and Germany
Wool and woollen textiles	Iceland, Scotland, Danelaw in England
Fish and fats	Iceland, Scandinavia
Iron, furs, soapstone, fish, timber, antlers, walrus ivory	All over Scandinavia: Sweden and Norway, Finland, Denmark
Wheat, honey, tin, jet, slaves, wood and leather goods	Ireland, Danelaw in England
Pottery, cloth, gold, jewels, silver, weapons	Germany

ACTIVITY SHEET 6

Trade and exploration

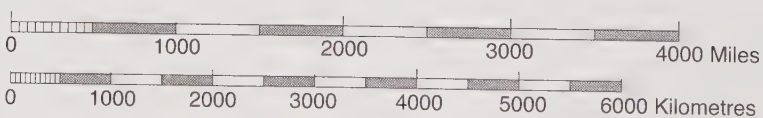
Name _____

Date _____



Key

Scale



ACTIVITY SHEET 7

A conference about the Vikings

Name _____

Date _____

Your class will become a group of experts and people interested in the Vikings ready for a conference you are all going to hold. You will have a short time slot to present your ideas to the 'experts' and then answer their questions. Choose your subject from the points below. Work in small groups to prepare your talk.

Choose one of the discussion points below and be prepared to explain your answers.

1. Why do you think the Vikings made Dublin and York their important centres?
2. What three things do you think people should know about the Vikings?
3. What have been the most interesting things you have learned about the Vikings?
4. What else would you like to know about the Vikings that you have not studied so far?
5. Which would you rather be: an archaeologist working with artefacts or a historian working with old manuscripts and texts?
6. Suppose you had been living in East Anglia in the 860s. Would you have advised your chieftain to pay the Vikings the Danegeld and get rid of them (i.e. pay the bribe money) or would you have urged him to get the army together and fight back?
7. Imagine that you know you have Viking ancestry (perhaps you really have!). What would you be most proud of in your heritage?
8. Imagine that you are an archaeologist who has heard that the Vikings had come to America in the tenth century. What would you look for as evidence that the Vikings had been there?

Who to believe?

Name _____

Date _____

In the video you saw how different people who already lived in Scotland felt about the Vikings, and heard the Viking point of view. In a small group, you are going to develop your own role-play showing how people at the time would have had very different ideas about themselves and the other group.

Here are some possible characters for your play, or you could choose some of your own:

- a Viking woman who has come with her family and settled in Britain
- Viking children born in Britain, but whose family has kept strong links to Viking ways
- the child of an Anglo-Saxon who has married a Viking
- a young Anglo-Saxon child whose family has always lived in the area
- a monk
- an Anglo-Saxon farmer
- a Viking warrior in Ivar the Boneless' army who fought against King Alfred's army
- an Anglo-Saxon at King Alfred's court.

Perhaps, for part of your play, the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings should talk to each other in separate groups, and then meet up for some reason. Over to you!

ACTIVITIES: TEACHER'S NOTES

Activity 1: Viking ships

Divide the class into small groups who take on a different focus, for example:

- how the ships were built
- how we know about them
- about rowing and the sails
- about sleeping arrangements and food
- navigation
- other things the children may want to include.

You may want to give your class a 'starter grid' like the one below, or design a grid with them, for collecting information prior to them working out their presentations.

Activity 2: the legacy of the Vikings in place names

Divide the map of Britain into small sections, and give groups of children a section to explore. If you are based in Yorkshire, you may want to concentrate only on this area.

Activity 6: trade and exploration

The children's task is to mark where the goods were bought or produced.

1. Either give children the map provided on the activity sheet or a map with the place names included.
2. They should make small pictures or symbols for the different goods, using different colour papers or markers. Then they can stick or draw these on to the map with a key to identify the goods.
3. Show them the trade routes map on pages 10-11.

Activity 7 and Activity 8

Activities 7 and 8 are designed to be completed at the end of the project, once all the relevant material has been studied.

Starter grid

Focus	Remember to include!	Some more detail
Ships were used for raiding and trading	We need to explain how they were different	Longships and trading ships
They were brilliant and efficient for what they needed to do	'Long, sleek and fast' explain about the shallow keel which could go in shallow places	[To be filled in when children do some research and discuss what they want to say]
How they were built	What they used, how they were made waterproof; shape, the prow	"
How we know	The ship finds, dendrochronology telling us where wood came from and when	"
All about the sails	Who made them, shape, how used at night	"
Navigation	The sun shadow stones and boards, tides, seaweed, birds	"

USEFUL WEBSITES

General

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/>

<http://www.channel4.com/history/microsites/H/history/t-z/vikings3.html> <http://www.vikinganswerlady.com/index.shtml>

<http://www.regia.org/vikings.htm>

<http://www.jorvik-viking-centre.co.uk/vikings1.htm>

Runes

http://www.cdli.ca/CITE/v_runes.htm

Shipbuilding and navigation

<http://www.nmm.ac.uk/server/show/colWebDoc.3937>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/vikings/travel/travel2.shtml>

Artefacts

<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/tours/lin/enc9344.html>

PLACES TO VISIT

Jorvik Viking Centre

Coppergate

York

YO1 9WT

Tel: 01904 643211

National Museum and Gallery/Cardiff

Cathay's Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NP

Tel: 029 2039 7951

National Museum of Ireland

2 College Green

Dublin 2

Tel: 01 677 6801

British Museum

Great Russell Street

WC1B 3DG

Tel: 020 7323 8000

VIKINGS

Teacher's Activity Book

This Teacher's Activity Book is designed to support your use of BBC Active *Vikings*

This Teacher's Activity Book includes:

- synopses of the programmes
- links to the history curriculum and cross-curricular links
- support for teaching history at Key Stage 2
- background information, maps and further references
- eight photocopiable activity sheets.

About the author

Hilary Claire was a primary school teacher for several years before teaching citizenship and history on the London Metropolitan University's primary ITE class. She became a consultant and leader of educational courses.

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